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ABSTRACT

A special process created for institutions to preserve and promote the qualitative nature of their existence is presented. This process can be used to strengthen their marketing capacity (development, alumni, and public relations, admissions, and enrollment management). The Institutional Distinctiveness Survey (IDS) is described as it was used recently by a state consortium of private colleges to determine the qualitative distinctiveness of member institutions. Examples of its outcome are presented as evidence that institutions differ notably as to what constitutes the distinctive nature of their performance doctrine. The survey differs from others of a similar nature by being more ideological than environmental and having a rating scale and an interview guide. Survey elements consist of the inclined dimensions of doctrine described by R. R. Parsonage (1978). They constitute a full range of human ideals with their essence, relevance, and relationships requiring interpretation by any academic community. The IDS's institution-building guidelines anticipate the need to create administrative procedures for monitoring an institution's accepted performance doctrine by recommending the creation of an "Institutional Distinctiveness Administrative Council" to deal with distinctiveness, administration, and council. Tables are included. Contains 9 references. (SM)

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ASSESSING INSTITUTIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS WITH "PERFORMANCE DOCTRINE" CONSTRUCT

Research Paper For Presentation

1989 ASHE Annual Meeting

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This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held at the Ritz-Carlton, Buckhead in Atlanta, Georgia, November 2-5, 1989. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

Assessing Institutional Distinctiveness With "Performance Doctrine" Construct

Institutions are organizations, but not all organizations are institutions. Ergo, what constitutes an institution and its functional form in society? For many, this is a major question requiring serious attention for the future state of providing important human service, e.g., Naisbitt (1982), Hansmann (1989).

Introduction

Higher education operations traditionally have been vested in institutional type structures. Meaning they are charged with providing necessary qualitative human service. Despite this important organizational lineage, in our present era higher education institutions oftentimes can differ notably regarding their social structures and performance criteria, and which can influence significantly the nature of their "institutionality".

Range of Institutions by Form

Instrumental - institutions offering programs in highly pragmatic, analytic structures controlled by criteria of efficiency, e.g., an urban based commuter campus.

Normative - institutions with programs embodied in a distinctive belief system of a bonded community governed by criteria of effectiveness, e.g., a church related liberal arts college.

What may be described as an expanding diversification in institutional forms of higher education is attributable to a variety of causes. Chief of which for the purpose of this paper

is the expanding market driven environment of higher education as described by Burton Clark (1983), and the manner by which institutions are being forced to strategically market their case.

At the same time, other authorities such as George Keller (1983) are concerned that institutions not jeopardize the qualitative nature of their value base although they should employ strategic decision making processes to respond effectively to environmental pressures. For Keller, it is important that an institution not neglect the importance of its normative value base, and maintains that if this should occur it also could adversely affect an institution's strategic marketing plan.

Purpose

The purpose of the research project presented by this paper is to describe a special process created for institutions to preserve and promote the qualitative nature of their existence, and which at the same time also can be used to strengthen their marketing capacity, i.e., development, alumni and public relations, admissions, and enrollment management.

This "institution-building" process, with its major component consisting of the Institutional Distinctiveness Survey (IDS), has been validated by use in a number of settings, (Chamberlain, 1985). The survey also has been used in an adapted form by two major health care systems. The focus of this paper is the survey's recent use by a state consortium of private colleges to determine the qualitative distinctiveness of member institutions.

Theoretical Framework

The "performance doctrine" construct provides the theoretical framework for creating and implementing the process used for assessing an institution's distinctiveness. The construct differs somewhat from the concept of organizational culture which is current in the literature, e.g., Masland (1985), Kuh (1988).

While the doctrine construct addresses many of the same qualitative aspects of organizational culture, it is much more synonymous with ideology. Doctrine is identified with the idea of organizational autonomy, and the principles and practices of performance which are promoted and sanctioned as the means to substantiate the institution's individualized existence.

The roots of the doctrine construct are derived from the latin word doctrina meaning teaching or instruction, and which also includes its qualitative outcomes, i.e., the habits and behaviors and the qualities of mind cultivated by teaching.

The special significance of a performance doctrine for identifying and describing institutional distinctiveness is that it is not just "end bound" as is mission, nor "means bound" as is program. A performance doctrine, in effect, can substantially embody and integrate both. It thus can epitomize an institution's full expression as an active academic community and the distinctive performance dimensions which bond its constituent groups and oversee its general operations, i.e., excellentia per doctrina - "distinction through teaching".

This concept also corresponds with that of Robert Greenleaf (1977) regarding what constitutes an institution, and provides a means for contrasting instrumental and normative institutional forms. For Greenleaf "an institution is a gathering of persons who have a accepted a common purpose, and a common discipline to guide the pursuit of that purpose, to the end that each involved person reaches higher fulfillment as a person, through serving and being served by the common venture, more so than would be achieved alone or in a less committed relationship".

The "institution-building" process described by this paper assumes an institution to be generically needful of a distinctive, value-based social structure committed to providing fundamental support service for constituent groups. And which consequently will advance the institution's strategic marketing plan.

Model Construction

The performance doctrine construct is the basis for constructing the Institutional Distinctiveness Survey. The survey differs from others of a somewhat similar nature, i.e. CUES and IFI, by virtue of it being more ideological than environmental, existing in a more succinct form, and consisting of two component parts - a rating scale and an interview guide.

The survey elements consist of the inclined dimensions of doctrine described by R. R. Parsonage (1978). They constitute a full range of human ideals with their essence, relevance and relationships requiring interpretation by any academic community.

A. Survey's Doctrine Dimensions by Group and Orientation
(IDS assessment instrument)

Purpose - To identify the distinctive nature of the performance doctrine of an institution according to the rated relevance by constituent groups of each of the following dimensions.

Operative/Active - Preferred practice and effect.

* Personal Development - growth in all aspects of life
* Egalitarian - constituent opportunity for all societal groups
* Socio-Political - accord with civic, social and professional groups

Relative/Cognitive - Preferred relations and discernment

* Humane - respect for individual differences, needs life styles
* Moral - values and ethics appropriate to academic, professional and social settings
* Intellectual - fullness in all educational processes and settings

Perspective/Contextual - Favored attitude and synthesis

* Spiritual - highly refined in thought and feeling
* Tradition - relevance of heritage and shared sense of community
* Epochal - cognizance of emergent conditions and demands (this dimension added after present study)

The assessment process presumes all dimensions exist with relevance in any institutional setting, but not necessarily all at the exact same level. The IDS is designed to identify each dimension's importance, and their general relationship in a given setting. Each dimension has a functional definition, a criterion statement, and a scale for rating its perceived relevance level.

B. Survey's Doctrine Dimension Purveyors of Distinctiveness (IDS interview guide)

Purpose - The following performance categories are used by the interview process to identify specific performance factors that are judged to strongly contribute to the nature and importance of particular doctrine dimensions as distinctively profiled by constituent groups using rating scale.

Programs i.e., established proceedings, operations, functions
e.g., curricular, co-curricular

Activities i.e., standardized events, meetings, incidents
e.g., academic affairs, student affairs

Ceremonies i.e., distinctive value based processes, observances
e.g., institutional, campus organizations

Symbols i.e., vehicles of notable expression
e.g., logos, monuments, structures, locations

Personages i.e., individuals distinguished by role or status
e.g., faculty, administrators, others

Sagas i.e., heroic stories with captivating components
e.g., legends, important happenings, lineage

Model Application

The IDS consists of instruments both for creating numerical ratings and for conducting interviews. They are not intended nor designed to conduct statistical studies of an analytic nature.

The instruments simply provide a means for placing qualitative data in a quantitative framework. The numbers that are used in the rating scale are not given statistical weight, only the value importance placed on them by those completing the survey and for those who have interest in interpreting the results. The instruments' reliability has been tested through extensive use.

The collected numerical data that rates the doctrine dimensions are interpreted using a Standard Scale (T scores), which displays the dimension's relative importance according to a central tendency to a common mean, i.e.,

a. The closer all dimensions cluster around the mean, (within 40 and 60 on the scale, and mean of 50), an institution's performance doctrine is both integrative and comprehensive.

b. Where most dimensions fall mainly between 40 and 60 on the scale, but one or more are above 60 (one standard deviation) the institution's performance doctrine may be pictured as being both integrated and having a specific featured focus.

c. In cases where all dimension's tend to range broadly across the scale (below 40 to above 60), the performance doctrine may be interpreted as being highly specialized, with primary focus placed mainly on dimensions only in the upper rankings.

These results are used as a basis for constructing a functional map of an institution's distinctive performance doctrine at a particular point in time with its major contours highlighted by numerical references. This map is in the form of a matrix displaying the results of the use of both survey instruments (re: Table IV). Like any map, it can both guide and illustrate and also be used as a plan for implementing change.

In short, the map provides a basis for determining future courses of action for advancing the institution's doctrine, and for adding major substance to the institution's marketing plan.

Research Project Presentation

The main purpose of this paper is to describe the use of the Institutional Distinctiveness Survey by a state consortium of private colleges. And to present examples of its outcome as evidence that institutions can differ notably as to what constitutes the distinctive nature of their performance doctrine.

The Associated Colleges of Indiana (ACI) is composed of over thirty individual institutions. While there is diversity in their size, environmental settings, and their mission, the majority of association members can be described in form as being customary liberal arts colleges. This might suggest for some persons that they all would have similar performance doctrines.

It was requested that the survey in each institutional setting be completed by all faculty and administrators. This was to assure that respondents would be those most familiar with and responsible for the institution's performance expectations.

The following pages each contain a table displaying and contrasting the doctrine profiles of two institutions.

The profiles in Table I contrast two institutions judged to have the most remote performance doctrines. The first institution has an extremely high "specialized" commitment to Intellectual excellence, with the second institution having a very strong "focused" major commitment to the Perspective/Contextual dimensions of Spiritual and Tradition.

The profiles displayed in Table II contrast two institutions with a mission of engineering technology. The first institution has its primary focus on Relative/Cognitive dimensions with Intellectual highly "specialized", the Perspective/Contextual dimension of Tradition given a somewhat "focused" relevance, and the Operative/Active dimension of Egalitarian rated most minimal in importance. The second institution, while also having a strong focus on Relative/Cognitive dimensions, differs significantly by giving the Operative/Active dimension of Egalitarian an extremely "specialized" performance rating.

The profiles displayed in Table III are of two institutions with a common mission and church sponsorship. Both give a very "focused" importance to the Perspective/Contextual Spiritual dimension. Except for this dimension, the institutions differ as to the nature of their performance doctrines. The first institution has a "focused" importance given to the Tradition dimension, while the other institution has it among those lowest rated. Furthermore, the first institution rates the Operative/Active dimension of Egalitarian with minimal importance, while the second institution rates it with a rather "focused" importance.

The information displayed by the tables clearly show that institutions will have their own performance doctrines which determine their nature as academic communities. They describe the general quality of institutional life in which campus groups exist, and its articulation may well have marketing significance.

TABLE I

Diversity of Performance Doctrines by Extreme Form

INSTITUTIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS PROFILE

Institution University Evansville

Below are the eight dimensions of doctrine displayed on a standard scale according to their ranked order of importance determined by the survey, and listed in the columns depicting their distinctive orientation.

N= 89

Dimension Orientation

Relative/Cognitive - Operative/Active - Perspective/Contextual

SD - 70	Intellectual		70 - SD
69			69
68			68
67			67
66			66
65			65
64			64
63			63
62			62
61			61
SD - 60			60 - SD
59			59
58			58
57			57
56			56
55			55
54			54
53		Egalitarian	53
52		Personal Bevel.	52
51	Moral		51
Mean- 50			50 -Mean
49			49
48			48
47			47
46			46
45			45
44		Tradition	45
43		Spiritual	46
42			43
41		Socio-Political	42
SD - 40			41
39			40 - SD
38			39
37	Humane		38
36			37
35			36
34			35
33			34
32			33
31			32
SD - 30			31
			30 - SD

INSTITUTIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS PROFILE

Institution Anderson College

Below are the eight dimensions of doctrine displayed on a standard scale according to their ranked order of importance determined by the survey, and listed in the columns depicting their distinctive orientation.

N= 99

Dimension Orientation

Relative/Cognitive - Operative/Active - Perspective/Contextual

SD - 70			70 - SD
69			69
68			68
67			67
66			66
65			65
64		Spiritual	64
63			63
62			62
61			61
SD - 60		Tradition	60 - SD
59			59
58			58
57			57
56			56
55	Moral		55
54			54
53			53
52		Personal Bevel.	52
51			51
Mean- 50	Humane		50 -Mean
49			49
48			48
47			47
46			46
45			45
44			44
43	Intellectual		43
42			42
41			41
SD - 40		Egalitarian	40 - SD
39			39
38			38
37			37
36			36
35		Socio-Political	35
34			34
33			33
32			32
31			31
SD - 30			30 - SD

TABLE II

Diversity of Performance Doctrines
Between Institutions With Comparable Missions

INSTITUTIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS PROFILE

Institution Rose-Hulman Inst. of Tech.

Below are the eight dimensions of doctrine displayed on a standard scale according to their ranked order of importance determined by the survey, and listed in the columns depicting their distinctive orientation.

N= 74

Dimension Orientation

Relative/Cognitive - Operative/Active - Perspective/Contextual

SD - 70		70 - SD
69		69
68		68
67		67
66		66
65	Intellectual	65
64		64
63		63
62		62
61		61
SD - 60		60 - SD
59		59
58		58
57		57
56	Personal Devel.	56
55		55
54		54
53		53
52		52
51		51
Mean- 50	Humane	50 -Mean
49	Moral	49
48		48
47	Socio-Political	47
46		46
45		45
44		44
43		43
42		42
41		41
SD - 40		40 - SD
39		39
38		38
37	Spiritual	37
36	Egalitarian	36
35		35
34		34
33		33
32		32
31		31
SD - 30		30 - SD

11

15

3

INSTITUTIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS PROFILE

Institution Indiana Institute of Technology

Below are the eight dimensions of doctrine displayed on a standard scale according to their ranked order of importance determined by the survey, and listed in the columns depicting their distinctive orientation.

N= 23

Dimension Orientation

Relative/Cognitive - Operative/Active - Perspective/Contextual

SD - 70		70 - SD
69		69
68	Egalitarian	68
67		67
66		66
65		65
64		64
63		63
62		62
61		61
SD - 60		60 - SD
59		59
58		58
57	Intellectual	57
56		56
55		55
54	Humane	54
53		53
52		52
51		51
Mean- 50		50 -Mean
49		49
48	Moral	48
47	Personal Devel.	47
46	Tradition	46
45		45
44	Socio-Political	44
43		43
42		42
41		41
SD - 40		40 - SD
39		39
38		38
37		37
36		36
35	Spiritual	35
34		34
33		33
32		32
31		31
SD - 30		30 - SD

3

16

TABLE III

Diversity of Performance doctrines
Between Institutions with Common Sponsorship

INSTITUTIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS PROFILE

Institution St. Mary of the Woods College

Below are the eight dimensions of doctrine displayed on a standard scale according to their ranked order of importance determined by the survey, and listed in the columns depicting their distinctive orientation.

N= 61

Dimension Orientation

Relative/Cognitive - Operative/Active - Perspective/Contextual

INSTITUTIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS PROFILE

Institution Marian College

Below are the eight dimensions of doctrine displayed on a standard scale according to their ranked order of importance determined by the survey, and listed in the columns depicting their distinctive orientation.

N= 88

Dimension Orientation

Relative/Cognitive - Operative/Active - Perspective/Contextual

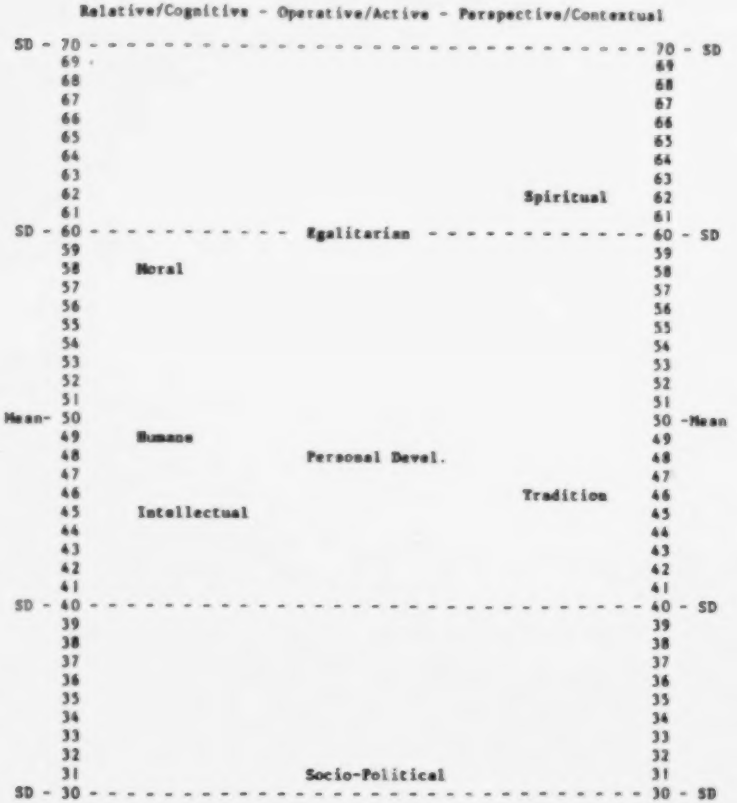

TABLE IV

Comprehensive "Map" of Institutions Performance Doctrine

DOCTRINE DIMENSIONS (rating)	PERFORMANCE CATEGORY FACTORS					
	Programs	Activities	Ceremonies	Symbols	Personages	Sagas
Intellectual (1)	Qualit. teach. Fac/stud ratio Acad. calendar certain prog's	Convocations Honors Day Mortar Board Richter Grants	Commencement Fresh. orient.	Hanover logo Faculty housing	General qual. of faculty	
Tradition (2)	Greek housing	Athletics	Homecoming	The "Pointe" Faculty housing Campus location Campus architec.	Administrator alumni	1974 tornado
Personal Development (3)	Fac/stud rela. Theatre/arts Greek & resid. life	Convocations Campus clubs Intramural sports			Campus Chaplin	
Moral (4)	Phil. & Theol. courses Teaching essence	Convocations	Chapel services		Campus Chaplin Faculty exemplars	
Humane (5)	Facul. advising Fac/stud rela. International club	Convocations General campus operations		Campus chapel	Campus Chaplin Faculty exemplars	"open door" campus
Spiritual (6)	Acad. advising Phil. & Theol. courses	Convocations	Religious services	Campus chapel	Campus Chaplin	
Socio-Political (7)	Link program Outreach prog. Fraternity practicums	Political clubs Commun. Peace committee				
Egalitarian (8)	Multicultural recruitment Interna. club Athletics					

Following the profile tables is Table IV which displays the results of the use of the IDS interview instrument by one of the project's institutions. This matrix shows how the IDS can "map" an institution's in-depth performance doctrine from the results of both the rating of doctrine dimensions and the listing of the support factors with consensus by all group members surveyed.

Project Significance

The nature of certain environmental change factors such as an incurring diversity of major social values, the fragmenting of some constituent groups, and the pending retirement of increasing numbers of senior faculty and administrators, presents a consequential need to create administrative procedures for monitoring an institution's accepted performance doctrine.

The IDS's institution-building guidelines anticipate this need by recommending the creation of an "Institutional Distinctiveness Administrative Council". The Council's purpose is contained in the very words of its title, i.e.,

Distinctiveness - the quality or state of being distinctive

Administrative - of latin origin, "ad" signifies intensity of motion and direction, and "ministrative" denotes an active ministry of service and doing things needful.

Council - a central body joining different groups and individuals common interest for their common good.

The Council's "ministry" is to advance and market the institution's doctrine with the use of the performance matrix.

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